

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending in the application.

Claims 1-14 were rejected.

I. 35 USC §112 Claim Rejections

In the Office Action, claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as based on a disclosure which is not enabling. Applicants respectfully traverse that rejection and request reconsideration by the Examiner.

The invention here is directed to a clamping mechanism for routing a length of fiber optic cable from an interior to an exterior of a fiber distribution frame, and more particularly between a fiber shelf housed in the interior of such a frame and its exterior. A unique feature of the clamping mechanism of the invention is that it both maintains the fiber cable within an acceptable bend radius and enables the length of fiber cable external to the distribution frame to the swiveled by approximately 180 degrees.

In the Office Action, the basis for the §112 rejection of the claims is said to be that "the fiber stubs 220 and 320 which are critical or essential to the practice of the invention, but not included in the claims is not enable by the disclosure." Based on a telephonic inquiry from Applicants' counsel to the Examiner in respect to this rejection basis, it is understood that some confusion may exist as to the nature of the "fiber stubs," and that the Examiner's view is that the such fiber stubs represent a critical claim element.

Applicants respectfully suggest that fiber stubs as discussed in the application are both well-known in the art and adequately described in the specification. In particular, such fiber stubs constitute a length of fiber optic cable that is used to provide an optical connection

between optical terminations at a shelf within a fiber distribution frame and an interconnection or splice point for the stub length of cable outside the distribution frame. Note, in this regard, the description at page 3, lines 3-5, of the Specification that:

"Pre-terminated fiber shelves provide a convenient means of installing fiber cable connections at a network location. Such shelves are equipped with optical connectors that have been assembled onto the end of a fiber cable stub (i.e., a short length of fiber cable)."

The description goes on to note that the fiber cable constituting the fiber stub comprises a number of individual fibers surrounded by a sheathing, and that the sheathing is typically removed at the point where the fiber cable stub enters the distribution frame, via the swivel connector of the invention.

It is noted that each of the independent claims refers to an optical fiber being routed via the device of the invention. Applicants believe it clear that such reference to an optical fiber in the claims corresponds to the fiber stub described in the specification. See, in particular, independent claim 6 which refers to the optical fiber being directed (or routed) through an entry portal of a shelf from the interior of the shelf to a raceway extending from the exterior of the shelf. This seems a complete and adequate characterization of the fiber stub described in the specification.

----- Although the Applicants do not wish to appear uncooperative in respect to the -----
 Examiner's concern, they are uncertain at this point as to what amendment to the claims would be warranted. In the event that the Examiner determines that the language of independent claim 6 is acceptable, and wants the remaining independent claims amended to include similar

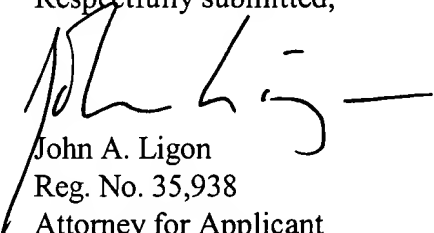
language, Applicants are quite willing to make such amendments. However, the Applicants request further guidance from the Examiner in this regard.

Reconsideration of the §112 rejection of Applicants' claims is accordingly respectfully requested.

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Please charge any fees due in respect to this amendment to Deposit Account No. 50-1944.

Respectfully submitted,


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I hereby certify that this Response to Office Action is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First-Class Mail, postage-prepaid, in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313 on November 3, 2003.

By: 

John A. Ligon